



Purim Inspiration

By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

On Tuesday, we celebrated the Jewish holiday of Purim. This fun, festive holiday honors the Book of Esther. In a nutshell, Esther was the reluctant queen of King Ahasuerus and ultimately saved the Jewish people. I had the pleasure of retelling the story for our preschool children. It was so fun hearing their giggles and boo's for the evil Haman. I wanted to delve deeper into Esther, this unassuming heroine and see what I could learn from her.

I came across an article on Chabad.org, "9 Life Lessons From Queen Esther" by Yehuda L. Ceitlin That says there "are nine practical life lessons we can learn from Queen Esther:"

1. Believe in your hidden powers.

And isn't this a beautiful message to share with our children. Believe in yourself. Be proud of who you are and your abilities. Dig deep and see what individual greatness you bring to the table and share it with others. Imagine if each of us were valued for who we are and what we can do.

2. Embrace your destiny.

"G-d places us where we need to be in order to fulfill our mission in life." Have you ever heard the phrase, "G-d doesn't give you more than you can handle"? Well I do believe that this has great meaning in our lives. Think about the inner strength you find in the most stressful situations and how you rise to the occasion.

3. Let your inner beauty shine.

When contestants vying to be Ahasuerus's new queen were brought to the palace, they were given a lengthy beauty regimen involving physical pampering and cosmetic treatments, but Esther declined those luxuries. Instead, it was her natural beauty that immediately captured the king's attention above all the others.

4. Be principled.

Yehuda reminds us that even in the palace, Esther ate only kosher food. Decide who you are, the values you stand for and don't waver. People will respect you for it.

5. We're stronger together.

And as we come through the pandemic, hopefully on the other side, this is even more evident. We isolated, quarantined, wore masks and Zoomed with our family and friends. It's time to connect, in person, and enjoy each other's company.

6. When in trouble, turn to G-d.

And I will add, turn to G-d always. Include him in your life. I know that because I credit HaShem with all of my blessings and with the strength that I have to overcome adversity, I feel grounded and know that I always have someone in my corner. With this knowledge I can do anything.



7. Take the lead in action.

Don't be afraid to be the leader. You would be amazed at how comforting this makes others feel and how they are willing to pitch in and be supportive. Often when people don't have direction, they just accept the status quo and then nothing gets accomplished.

8. Prepare to make sacrifices.

Sometimes you have to go out on a limb and choose the path not chosen.

9. Never lose hope.

After the ordeal was over, Esther requested that her story be documented. What was Esther trying to accomplish in telling the Purim story? And what is her message to us? According to one commentary, the basic message of Esther's story is this: No matter how hopeless your situation may seem, never lose hope. And this is a timeless message for us all.